



Ankin Law Office LLC
Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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What is the automobile recall process?

Written by Admin - BN on January 27th, 2012



We're all familiar with motor vehicle recalls. They happen all the time. Whether you hear about it in the news or receive a letter from the manufacturer, we've owned cars that have been recalled at one point or another.

But how exactly does an automobile manufacturer decide whether to issue a recall? And what is the process that is followed once that decision is made?

The Chicago Tribune recently examined that process in an article that focused on the obligations of car manufacturers upon learning of a large scale safety defect. As explained in the [article](#), once a defect is found, the auto manufacturer must follow a specific procedure:

Most safety recalls are voluntarily initiated by an automaker after determining that one or more of its vehicles has a safety defect...Federal regulations require that once a manufacturer finds such a defect, it must report it within five working days to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the agency that enforces motor vehicle safety regulations.

But, how exactly are automobile defects discovered in the first place? Well, according to the article, vehicle manufacturers conduct safety studies and tests, during which they sometimes find safety defects. Other times, they learn of defects after receiving multiple reports from different owners regarding problems with a particular car model. And other times, crash tests conducted by NHTSA and organizations such as the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety result in data that indicates safety issues with particular models.

Once a safety issue or defect is identified, the automaker must notify the NHSTA, even if the manufacturer has not yet figured out what is causing the problem or how to fix it.

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Of course, the reason that manufacturers are required to follow these procedures is to ensure that all motor vehicles are as safe as possible, since the safer the cars are, the less likely that passengers will be seriously injured in a [car accident](#). Because prevention is always the best policy.

You can learn more about recent automobile recalls and see if a car that you own has been recalled by heading over to the [Kicking Tires Blog](#).

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